

Sandra Grey  
National Secretary  
New Zealand Tertiary Education Union (NZTEU)

Alison Barnes  
President  
National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU)

19 April 2024

Dear Sandra and Alison

**Cancellation of the PBRF and ERA**

At UCU, we were delighted by the recent news that the forthcoming Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) round has been cancelled in New Zealand. We note that this follows on from a similar decision in 2023 to discontinue the national research assessment exercise in Australia - the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA).

In the UK we have laboured under successive research assessment exercises since the mid-1980s, most recently with the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF). As in Australia and New Zealand, these national research assessment exercises are time consuming and burdensome for staff and universities. In addition, they can result in greater institutional control, management and regulation of research activity, thus undermining the autonomy of researchers and infringing upon academic freedom.

In the UK, we are continuing to campaign against the next iteration of our national research assessment exercise – the 2029 Research Excellence Framework (REF) and take heart from recent developments in Australia and New Zealand.

To assist us in our campaign here in the UK, we would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail, including how you have been able to achieve these positive outcomes in your respective countries.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Jo Grady  
General Secretary